

months.' Many signs of hasty and imperfect workman-ship there are. The introduction of Herbert's mistress is a serious aesthetic blunder. Lady Annabel Herbert in the earlier portion of the book is a stately though severe, if not awe-inspiring, figure; but her behaviour towards the end is hardly consistent with her character, and her reconciliation with Herbert strikes us as somewhat forced. Probably also the conditions, under which the book was written supply the best explanation of a curious plagiarism from Macaulay which has often been discussed. The well-known passage in the essay on Moore's *Life of Byron* beginning 'We know no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical tits of morality' is appropriated bodily with no better acknowledgment in the original text of the novel than the introductory phrase, 'It has been well observed'; though in subsequent editions to fence in the borrowed passage the words 'These observations of a celebrated writer' are introduced into the sentence with which the narrative is resumed.

*Venetia* had not the popular success of *Henrietta Temple*, though it pleased the critics more. Even the *Athenaeum* hailed it as exhibiting 'much less of affectation and disordered ardour' than that 'incoherent love-story'; and its appearance was made the occasion for an article in the *Edinburgh Review*<sup>1</sup> which was written in no captious spirit, but endeavoured, though not sparing Disraeli's faults, to do justice to his merits as a novelist. The reviewer, however, upbraided him severely for 'intruding into the domestic life of a poet and his relations and extracting the materials of fiction out of events so recent and so melancholy'; and the introduction of Lady Caroline Lamb was especially condemned both then and later. Though Lady Caroline Lamb had been in the grave many years, her husband was still alive and — a fact that is not irrelevant — the Whig Prime Minister; but it may probably have been